

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TUNIS 06026 091635Z

60

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SCCT-01 IO-10 AID-05 OPR-02 /087 W

----- 049367

R 091516Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHCD 434

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 6026

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, ELAB, TS

SUBJECT: STATE SECURITY COURT TRIAL ENDS

REF: TUNIS 5868

1. SUMMARY: STATE SECURITY COURT TRIAL ENDED OCTOBER 4 WITH CONVICTIONS OF MOST OF THE ACCUSED AND PRISON TERMS FOR THEM OF UP TO NINE YEARS. CONVICTIONS BASED ON CHARGES OF FORMING EXTRA-LEGAL ASSOCIATIONS, PLOTTING AGAINST STATE SECURITY, AND CIRCULATING ANTI-GOVERNMENT TRACTS. THERE WERE NO CONVICTIONS FOR PLANNING OR ACTUALLY CARRYING OUT SPECIFIC VIOLENT ACTS. DEFENSE ATTORNEYS CLAIMED THAT TUNISIAN CONSTITUTION GUARANTEES RIGHT OF CITIZENS TO FREE ASSOCIATION AND EXPRESSION OF OPINION, ASSERTED THAT GOT DID NOT PROVE MATERIAL ACTS AGAINST STATE SECURITY, AND ALSO PRODUCED EVIDENCE PURPORTING THAT ACCUSED HAD BEEN TORTURED IN COURSE OF INVESTIGATION. LE MONDE ISSUE FOR OCTOBER 4 REPORTEDLY CARRYING ADDITIONAL ARTICLE UNFAVORABLE TO TUNISIAN SECURITY POLICY BLOCKED IN TUNIS. END SUMMARY.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TUNIS 06026 091635Z

2. STATE SECURITY COURT TRIAL THAT HAD BEGUN

SEPT. 23 ENDED ON OCTOBER 4 WITH THE ACQUITTAL OF 10, SUSPENDED CONVICTIONS FOR 12, AND CONVICTIONS WITH PRISON TERMS FOR 69. PRISON TERMS RANGED FROM SIX MONTHS TO NINE YEARS, THE LONGEST TERMS GOING TO THOSE TRIED IN ABSENTIA. THESE 79 JUDGMENTS FALL SHORT OF THE 101 PERSONS ORIGINALLY REPORTED IN THE PRESS TO BE ON TRIAL BUT THIS DIFFERENCE IS PROBABLY ACCOUNTED FOR BY TAP (TUNIS AFRIQUE PRESSE) PROPENSITY FOR ERROR. ACCORDING TO RELIABLE EYE-WITNESS REPORT, TRIAL ENDED AS IT HAD BEGUN, THE ACCUSED CHANTING SLOGANS AND SINGING REVOLUTIONARY SONGS. SECURITY FORCES SUPPRESSED THIS ACTIVITY BY BEATING THE ACCUSED IN COURT. OUR SOURCE DESCRIBED THIS INCIDENT AS "BRUTAL." COURT SUMMARILY SENTENCED ONE OF ACCUSED TO TWO EXTRA YEARS IN PRISON FOR DISRUPTION.

3. ATTORNEYS FOR ACCUSED BASED DEFENSE ON LACK OF EVIDENCE OF MATERIAL ACTS CARRIED OUT WHICH COULD BE CONSTRUED AS THREATENING STATE SECURITY. ATTORNEYS ARGUED THAT CONSTITUTION GUARANTEES FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND RIGHT TO HOLD AND PROPAGATE OPINIONS, THE PRINCIPAL ACTIONS ON WHICH GOVERNMENT PROSECUTION BASED. DEFENSE ALSO DEMANDED THAT TRACTS CIRCULATED BY ACCUSED BY PRODUCED IN EVIDENCE. GOVERNMENT ATTORNEYS REFUSED, DECLARING THAT DEFENSE WAS FULLY AWARE OF CONTENT OF TRACTS AND THAT THEY WERE TOO SCURRILOUS TO BE REPEATED IN PUBLIC. FINALLY, DEFENSE ATTORNEYS ALLEGED THAT SOME OF ACCUSED WERE TORTURED IN PROCESS OF GOT INVESTIGATION AND PRODUCED AFFIDAVITS FROM "PHYSICIANS AND HOSPITALS" PURPORTING TO BACK UP THIS CLAIM.

4. OCTOBER 4 CONVICTIONS WERE LIMITED TO PREVIOUSLY REPORTED INDICTMENT FOR PLOTTING AGAINST STATE SECURITY, FORMING ASSOCIATION NOT RECOGNIZED BY GOVERNMENT, INSULTING PRESIDENT AND OTHER GOVERNMENT FIGURES, AND CIRCULATING TRACTS. NO MENTION MADE IN CONVICTION OF ACTUAL VIOLENT ACTS EITHER PLANNED OR CARRIED OUT NOR WAS THERE ANY INDICATION OF WHO WERE AMONG THOSE "TRAINED BY GEORGE HABBASH'S PFLP IN LEBANON."

5. GOT PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN ON TRIAL CONTINUED THROUGH WEEK OF SEPT. 29 WITH ADDITIONAL PRESS ARTICLES
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TUNIS 06026 091635Z

ALONG LINES OF THOSE REPORTED IN TUNIS 5868. ARTICLES GAVE DETAILS OF HOW ORGANIZATION WAS FORMED IN FRANCE, HOW IT RECRUITED ACTIVISTS, AND HOW IT OPERATED IN TUNISIA. LE MONDE GAVE SHORT SHRIFT TO THIS CAMPAIGN WHICH WAS INITIATED LARGELY TO ANSWER DEROGATORY ARTICLE ON TUNISIA WHICH APPEARED ON SEP. 26. OCTOBER 1 LE MONDE BREEZILY REVIEWED TUNISIAN RIPOSTE TO DARMON ARTICLE WITHOUT MENTIONING ACCUSATION THAT SPECIFIC ACTS

OF VIOLENCE WERE PLANNED NOR THE TRAINING ALLEGEDLY AFFORDED
SOME OF THE ACCUSED BY THE PFLP. OCTOBER 4 LE MONDE DID
NOT CIRCULATE IN TUNIS, REPORTEDLY BECAUSE IT CONTAINED
ANOTHER ARTICLE DEROGATORY TO GOT BY TUNISIAN DISSIDENT
RESIDENT IN FRANCE.

6. COMMENT: NINE-YEAR SENTENCES ARE SEVEREST GIVEN BY
TUNISIAN COURTS TO DISSIDENTS WITHIN MEMORY AND INDICATE
THE SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH GOT VIEWS AFFAIR. ALLEGATIONS THAT
GOT USES TORTURE IN INVESTIGATION OF DISSIDENTS ARE NOT
NEW, BUT USE OF VIOLENCE IN OPEN COURT TO SUBDUE DEMONSTRATING
DEFENDENTS INS A DEPARTURE FROM PAST PRACTICES. IT HAS
STRUCK LOCAL OBSERVERS AS DISTRUBING. NEVERTHELESS,
MOST TUNISIANS REMAIN UNCONCERNED ABOUT TRIAL OR ITS IMPLICA-
TIONS DESPITE GOT EFFORTS TO DRAMATIZE THE DANGERS THIS
PARTICULAR FISSIDENT GRUP POSED TO SOCIETY.
END COMMENT.
SEELYE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL STABILITY, COURTS, TRIALS, EXTREMISTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 OCT 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975TUNIS06026
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750351-1113
From: TUNIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751068/aaaacisi.tel
Line Count: 133
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 TUNIS 5868
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <28 MAY 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <29 MAY 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: STATE SECURITY COURT TRIAL ENDS
TAGS: PINT, PINS, ELAB, TS
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006